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SUMMARY

of the

REPORT OF THE IN-DEPTH REVIEW OF THE NATIONAL COMMUNICATION

of

FRANCE

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Under articles 4 and 12 of the Convention, Parties are required to prepare national communications on their implementation of the Convention. Guidelines for the preparation of national communications and the process for their review were agreed on by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change, by its decisions 9/2 and 10/1, and by the Conference of the Parties, at its first session, by its decisions 2/CP.1 and 3/CP.1 (see FCCC/CP/1995/7/Add.1). In accordance with these decisions, a compilation and synthesis of the first 33 national communications from Annex I Parties was prepared (FCCC/CP/1996/12 and Add.1 and 2).

When reviewing the implementation of the Convention by Parties, the subsidiary bodies and the Conference of the Parties will have this report available to them in English as well as the summary of the report in the six official languages of the United Nations. (These bodies will also have before them the executive summary of the first national communication of France and country-specific information drawn from a compilation and synthesis report covering all countries that have submitted national communications.)

Summary 1/

1. The review team, which included experts from Belgium and from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), conducted its in-depth review of the first national communication of France between June 1996 and May 1997 and included a country visit from 17 to 21 June 1996.

2. Ever since the first oil shock, France's oil policy has been directed at protecting the country against energy shortages and cost increases. As a result, by 1990, the country had already realized substantial energy savings, particularly in the residential and industrial sectors. The marginal cost of reductions effected after the base year is therefore greater than comparable costs in certain other States parties. In 1990, per capita emissions of carbon dioxide (CO_2) were 5.92 tonnes (as opposed to an approximate average of 12 tonnes for OECD countries). As far as France is concerned, the commitment to adopt policies and measures aimed at limiting emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs), which appears in article 4, paragraph 2, of the Convention, will be implemented throughout the European Union (EU), by the Union and its member States, acting within the framework of their respective areas of competence. France is in favour of a uniform effort and believes that such an effort can be realized, inter alia, through coordinated fiscal measures. Europe-wide taxation of carbon at 70 Ecus per tonne, in accordance with the appropriate modalities, is cited by way of example. France's energy policy includes the decision to develop electrical capacity using nuclear energy. In 1992, the proportion of total primary energy supply from nuclear energy was almost 35 per cent, and from hydroelectric power, more than 7 per cent.

3. The 1990 inventory covers emissions of gases with a direct greenhouse effect, CO_2 (366.536 Gg), methane (CH_4) (2.895 Gg) and nitrogen protoxyde (N_2O) (177 Gg), as well as the ozone precursors nitrogen oxides (NO_x) (1.722 Gg), non-methane volatile organic compounds (NMVOCs) (2.424 Gg) and carbon monoxide (CO) (10.952 Gg). Emissions inventories were also prepared for 1991, 1992 and 1993. The CORINAIR methodology was used in preparing the inventory. An interface (methodology and software) was constructed, so that the inventory can be reorganized in accordance with the Guidelines adopted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

4. The national communication describes various policies and measures adopted for numerous sectors in order to reduce emissions of CO_2, CH_4, N_2O, NO_x, NMVOCs and CO and to increase the capacity of CO_2 sinks and reservoirs. Some of these measures are aimed specifically at the prevention of GHGs, although most of them have other primary or secondary objectives. Estimates are provided, when available, of the possible effects of each measure on GHGs.

5. Energy efficiency standards in effect for new buildings are already very strict; given the low renewal rate for housing stock, any new measures will have little short-term impact. As to existing buildings, tax incentives granted from 1 January 1990 to 31 December 1995 in order to encourage

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1/ In accordance with decision 2/CP.1 (see document FCCC/CP/1995/7/Add.1), the full draft of this report was communicated to the Government of France, which had no further comments.

investment in energy conservation measures, were renewed in 1996. The application of energy conservation measures to public buildings is expected to produce energy savings of 12 per cent, which would bring about a 200 ktC drop in CO_2, the volume fixed as the goal for the year 2000.

6. The predominance in France of nuclear-produced electricity will be maintained in the medium term, so that the possibility of limiting GHGs at the supply level will be confined to peak-load production. Measures aimed at levelling demand peaks are for the most part being applied as called for under the programme. The main focus of France's support of new and renewable sources of energy is on biomass and wind power. Although the price of wind power cannot at present compete with other sources of electricity, the costs should drop, and this measure is aimed at making it easier to market the technology. Implementation of the "energy-wood plan" involving the use of wood for heating, as described in the programme, continues.

7. As to the transport of goods, some reductions appear attainable thanks to the technical control programme and better vehicle maintenance; the reduction in the power of heavy vehicles proposed in the programme as a Community-wide measure, on the other hand, has not yet been discussed in depth with France's European partners. In the case of cars and other light vehicles, it should be increasingly possible to lower new vehicle fuel consumption after the year 2000 as part of a programme proposed by the European Commission. The nominal tax rate on regular grade petrol rose 15 per cent between 1990 and 1994, which increased the retail sales price by 9 per cent. A scheme set up to run until late 1995 which entitled any purchaser of a new car to a bonus for replacing a used car will produce a 0.32 MtC drop by the year 2000. The secondary consequences of giving bonuses for the purchase of new vehicles (increase in the number of new cars manufactured, which would mean an increase in emissions volume, or replacement of small used cars by new, bigger vehicles that consume more) have not yet been quantified, but such consequences could have the effect of cancelling out previously recorded drops in emissions.

8. The production of ethanol and methyl ester from rapeseed oil for use in the transport sector is proceeding according to plan. The goals for the year 2000 still appear feasible, although they depend on agricultural policy. The Government is encouraging the development of policies at the local level to reduce urban motor-vehicle traffic and is distributing transport management guidelines. According to the programme, better traffic control would reduce GHG emissions in urban centres by 20 per cent (0.6 to 0.9 MtC/yr), but it is not known to what extent such a reduction could be achieved by the year 2000. As to emissions of GHGs other than transport-related CO_2, the installation of catalytic converters in new petrol-engined cars in compliance with EU emissions standards will probably lead to increased per vehicle/km N_2O emissions over 1990 levels, even if the emissions of tropospheric ozone precursors dropped. The report does not contain any estimates on the effects of N_2O emissions by the year 2000.

9. Measures taken by France in the industrial sector include voluntary commitments to reduce emissions of an entire range of GHGs and regulations governing N_2O emissions. The content of the agreements already reached has been described for the team; they should reduce GHG emissions by about 1 MtC

by the year 2000, compared to 1990 levels. Since the programme started, the Government has broadened the range of financial aid for investments in energy efficiency and co-generation. A 180 F/t tax on industrial NMVOC emissions should lead to a 25,000-to-30,000-tonne drop per year. Agreements to limit NO_x emissions have been postponed, partially because of the delay in the EU's adoption of relevant guidelines on combustion.

10. During the current agricultural reform, higher priority is being given to maintaining the agricultural production potential, and accordingly the plans described in the communication for increasing wooded areas to 30,000 hectares in 1998 are not being implemented. The budget allocated for the use of wood in construction rose from 7 MF in 1993 to 23 MF in 1996 and is expected to continue to increase, albeit at a slower pace. The goal, which is to store 0.35 MtC per year by the year 2010, is being maintained, although its effects will probably be limited in the year 2000.

11. Projections of CO_2, CH_4 and N_2O are given separately, on a gas-by-gas basis, for the year 2000. Net emissions of CO_2, CH_4 and N_2O are presented in aggregate form, taking account of the Global Warming Potential (GWP) values set by the IPCC in 1994. Removals by sinks are considered, but are also presented separately. Projections include the effect of the measures. No "without measures" scenario has been prepared. The projections are provided for metropolitan France and indicate an overall stabilization of GHG emissions by the year 2000 as compared to 1990 when they are weighted at their GWP value. A 7 per cent increase in CO_2 emissions is offset by a 47 per cent reduction in N_2O emissions; by the year 2000, CH_4 emissions should be at approximately the same levels as in 1990. Stabilization of the country's emissions is not, however, considered the goal; as mentioned above, France has set a stabilization goal at the EU level only. A particular effort has been made to assess and present separately the effects of policies and measures. The manner in which the activities were carried out is described, and the hypotheses and approach on which the projections were based for most of the sectors are defined.

12. The change in emissions linked to energy consumption for heating is corrected for climate variations. The method is not described in the communication, but the review team received a satisfactory explanation. The method is based on the average degree/days for France and is applied to the proportion of energy consumption used for space heating by energy carrier and, separately, for industry and the residential/tertiary sectors. The base climate is the average of a 30-year period (1951-1980). The correction applied corresponds to a 9.5 Mt increase in CO_2 emissions in 1990, or 3 per cent of gross 1990 emissions.

13. According to projections, NO_x and NMVOC emissions in 2000 should decrease by about 30 per cent compared to 1990 levels, in line with the goals set in the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution. These projections are calculated as the aggregate of the specific effects of each measure. Expected reductions in CO (750 kt by the year 2000) are also indicated. Specific measures to reduce perfluorocarbon emissions (PFCs) in aluminium production should lead to a 115-tonne reduction in PFCs (equivalent to 0.3 Mt of coal).

14. As to bilateral cooperation with developing countries, a slowdown in the growth of aid as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) was reported for 1995, due principally to a cutback in debt-reduction activities. The information on scientific and technical cooperation activities implemented by the Centre for International Cooperation in Agronomic Research for Development (CIRAD) and the French Institute of Scientific Research for Development Cooperation (ORSTOM) was confirmed. Official development assistance (as a percentage of GDP) was 0.60 per cent in 1990 and rose steadily to 0.64 per cent in 1994, but fell to 0.55 per cent in 1995.

15. Reference was made to France's role in setting up the pilot phase of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and its continuing role in the current phase. The financial resources earmarked by the French authorities for the global environment exceed the country's total contribution to the GEF by 440 million francs, which has made it possible to set up a French GEF and allocate that amount to it. This facility will be used to finance the supplementary costs involved in taking the global environment into account in investment projects. To date, 50 per cent of the resources of the French GEF have been spent on climate change, with such projects taking longer to develop than those in other fields, such as biological diversity and international waters. The significant gearing (about 10:1) of the financing of the French GEF was pointed out. The resources of this facility are expected to be renewed at the end of a four-year cycle.